JPRS 75617

2 May 1980

Near East/North Africa Report

No. 2109

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PLO SPOKESMAN DISCUSSES RELATIONS WITH WEST EUROPE

Rotterdam NRC HANDELSBLAD in Dutch 31 Mar 80 p 5

[Article by Harm Botje: "We Cannot Accept Anything Less Than Our Own Palestinian State"]

[Text] Abd-al-Muhsin Abu Mayzar is the official spokesman for the Palestinian Liberation Organization in the Syrian capital of Damascus. Our correspondent, Harm Botje, let him speak and noted his complaints -- specifically about what the Palestinians consider to be the inconsistent policy of the West toward the PLO.

Damascus, March -- "What irritates me so in the West, is the inconsistent policy they are following. They say A, they mean B and they do C. I find that -- and then I am speaking in the name of the PLO -- very difficult. We have a bad press in the West, I know that; but on the other hand, you, in the West -- whether you are journalists or politicians -- come up with such one-sided and, excuse me for this, idiotic ideas. I sometimes think: if those people don't want to take the trouble to listen or to understand, what are they doing here then?"

"Take Afghanistan. I have read the important Western newspapers on the subject; all kinds of positions are attributed to us, but nobody came to me, as official spokesman, to ask what the situation really is."

"Look, we were opposed to the Islamic summit meeting in Islamabad, but not because we are pro- or anti-Russian. This was hardly discussed here during the internal debate. We were opposed to the date of this meeting because it diverted attention from the opening of diplomatic relations between Israel and Egypt. Furthermore, we did not think that Islamabad was an appropriate location because a conference there would shore up the unpopular dictatorship of Zia ul Haq. Moreover, we were afraid that India -- which is a very important ally for us and which, let us make no mistake about it, has more Moslems within its borders than Pakistan -- might have considered the conference as directed against itself."

"We did go in the end, to try to bend the conference resolutions and agenda according to our views. We succeeded reasonably well in this. It was not our intention there either to condemn or not to condemn the Russian intervention in Afghanistan. The point is that if you do so, you must draw a consistent line."

"The West condemns the invasion because the Afghans did not ask for the Russians. I am not going to argue the point here. But those same Americans will sit down with the Israelis and the Egyptians to decide about the fate of the Palestinians, even though not a single Palestinian has asked them to do so."

"We, Palestinians, are not at all communist or Marxist. Naturally, there are Marxist and communist groups within the PLO, just as you have Marxist parties in the Netherlands. Does that mean that the Netherlands is Marxist?"

"We are, if I am going to be honest about it, actually rather provincial, rather individualistic and, if we get the chance, we are all small capitalists. This has repeatedly caused quite a row within the PLO. But within a democratic, pluralistic organization like ours, this is allowed -- no, this is necessary."

"However, to get our status as Palestinians, with unalienable liberties and civil rights, such as a passport, our own state if that is our wish -- in order to get these rights generally accepted, we must proceed very realistically. The Soviet Union gives us unlimited support in our aspirations and this sort of thing imposes obligations."

"In the last instance, the Europeans see the United States as their security guarantee. Every European politician, whether conservative or socialist, takes this into account. But when we take our own reality into account, then everybody thinks it is crazy. After all, you do recognize the reality of Southern Africa, don't you? Why then not here?"

"The PLO has been recognized as a political reality by a large majority of the United Nations, as the only organization in which all Palestinians recognize themselves and which, because of that single fact, is the legitimate representative of the Palestinians. No matter how you turn or twist the matter, you cannot avoid the PLO."

"I also told your Van Dijl (the man who made the first official contact with the PLO in the name of the Dutch government -- author's note) this. I hope -- no, I believe that I convinced him. In any case, his visit alone, I find that -- and I am speaking in the name of the PLO -- an enormous step forward. It opens the prospect of a much more realistic and constructive policy on the part of the Dutch government. It is, once again, a small step forward in the solution of our Palestinian problems."

Palestinian State

"That problem is really not as complicated as it is made. We want the repeal of Security Council resolution 242, in which the Palestinians are mentioned only as refugees. We want a new resolution premised on the Palestinian right to self-determination, even if -- and this must be explicitly included -- even if this leads to an independent Palestinian state within the borders of the former British mandate of Palestine. What this state would look like or where in Palestine it would be located, is for me -- and I must say that opinions within the PLO vary on this -- of secondary importance."

"We cannot -- and I cannot stress this enough -- we cannot accept any other solution than our own state. Whether this state will be completely independent or whether it will enter into a federation with whoever it may be -- and I am excluding none of our neighbors here -- can only be considered later. Understand me well, it is not only a question of land. To have a state in a world, where in international dealings only states are recognized, is much more significant. We, as Palestinians, have nothing, except for the fortunate small minority which has received the citizenship of another state."

"I have four, five passports. That is the result of my function, and in that respect I am a blessed man. But I don't dare think of what would happen if I were to lose my function. Then I would no longer be anywhere. Then the Syrian government would issue me a passport with "Palestinian refugee" printed in large letters on it, and I would be reduced to a stateless individual."

"I would then, in the most literal sense of the word, be locked up in Syria, like most of the Palestinian refugees here. If I have family in Jordan, I would have to wait for weeks to receive permission to visit them. I would rarely get into Kuwait or Lebanon. I would not be able to go to Egypt or to Europe or to the United States. You know how terribly important family ties are in the Middle East. All our traditions, our whole social structure, our laws are based on that."

"Palestinians are scattered all over the Middle East, a brother here, a sister there, a mother somewhere else. It can hardly be any other way because after all we want to work someplace, we have to survive too. We have been successful in this, maybe even too successful in that there is substantial jealousy against us in the region."

Israel's Example

"In that regard, we have very consciously patterned ourselves after Israel. We have analyzed our defeats and have based a very consciously selected and systematically implemented education policy on it. We have applied ourselves in management, in medical and natural sciences, and in civil engineering. My parents, and the parents of so many other Palestinians, denied themselves to this end. We, as Palestinians, are immeasurably proud of this and it gives us, in spite of all the differences of opinion and the disagreements among us, an enormous feeling of a unity of fate."

"That is the great strength of the PLO -- you can ask any Palestinian -- and to underestimate that is not only a denial of a mature reality, it is a first class mistake in political judgement, a total underestimation of what the PLO means to the Palestinians."

"In such a situation, with such skills, not to have one's own bureaucratic identity leads to enormous and dangerous frustrations. We want our own state, we want our own passports, we want embassies abroad which would speak for us, which could deal with other governments on a basis of equality. We want a state which would give us the legal opportunity to establish our own companies, which would grant university degrees, which would regulate judicial matters among us and which would see to it that everywhere in the world we would be treated on a basis of equality, as normal Palestinian citizens."

8463
CSO: 3105

YAR SUBJECT TO PRESSURES IN QUEST FOR UNITY WITH PDRY

Paris AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic 25 Feb-2 Mar 80 p 28

[Article by Nabil Khalaf: "Saudi Arabia-Yemen. A silent dispute, the scene of which is Sana'a'. While the news has talked about expected changes in Sana'a'on the road to unity with Aden, Riyadh has asked for a delay, and has taken measures until the international atmosphere is clarified"]

[Excerpts] If there is one thread which binds the countries of the Arabian Gulf and the countries of Central Asia to each other, it is oil, politics, interests and fear of the future, following the disturbance of the regional balance due to the Iranian revolution. Then the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan occurred, and centers of fear in the area have begun to erupt one after another.

But the misfortune which puts the small states--especially those of the Gulf--at a loss is their being compelled, for the first time, to declare their affiliation with one of the two giants' camps, because the convulsive reactions which have marked the recent actions [of these camps] have not left anyone room to protect himself. Thus, the states of the Gulf and of the Horn of Africa have found themselves in a tug-of-war--here is the PDRY receiving an excessive amount of Soviet arms, and there is Oman granting the United States military facilities in its lands, and Somalia following it.

In this atmosphere, North Yemen has found itself facing great pressures. On its part, the unity negotiations with South Yemen had achieved some progress. It was said that a declaration of unity was imminent. Saudi Arabia was watching these negotiations and sanctioning them until the international pressure increased, and Saudi Arabia found itself exposed as well. The negotiations stopped for a time, and then resumed. But this time the southern part changed its tone and continued to utter veiled threats which frightened the north's army and politicians at the same time. Sana'a was compelled to set up a dialogue with its northern opponents who had taken refuge in Aden. The dialogue developed into quasirecognition of these people. In that manner, agreement on a formula for unity in stages between the two parts developed to a certain extent without reference to Saudi Arabia.

Sana'a' continued to conclude a truce until the Soviet forces entered Afghanistan, when it realized that it would be compelled to follow a policy of flexibility between the Saudi course, which binds it to the West, and the South Yemeni course, which ties it to the East, or at least to not choosing the West. Therefore, Sana'a' thought that it would be in its interest not to condemn the Soviet intervention when a resolution of condemnation was put to the vote at the United Nations. That was the first compulsory "revolt" against the great neighbor. Likewise, Sana'a' preferred not to condemn Soviet intervention in the Horn of Africa when the resolution of condemnation was submitted to the General Organization of the Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference in Isalamabad. That was received with disapproval. The excuse which its representative gave at the conference--that his government had not given him instructions about the matter--was insufficient without the explanation that this stand was for local Yemeni consumption and to accommodate the southern part.

Were it not [for the fact] that the struggle in the region is still in its Yemeni framework it was the nature of all this to affect Saudi-North Yemeni relations without causing them to become strained. But the entry of the area into the crucible of the cold war between the two camps has made Saudi Arabia incline toward inflexibility and intolerance, as it fears that the Soviets will appear on her frontiers under the banner of union between the two Yemens. Moreover, Saudi Arabia is not ready to give up "the historical influence" which it had in Yemen, and which it wishes to continue. Furthermore, in the view of observers, Saudi inflexibility cannot be explained solely from the angle of preserving this influence, but must also be seen from the angle of stopping the "communist danger" advancing from the PDRY.

At the time when the Gulf States were hesitating in the face of movements for which the PDRY constituted a stage, they did not want to increase the intensity of criticism of the actions perpetrated by their neighbor that put the entire region in peril--more than one Gulf authority has hinted at this. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia was of the opinion that the winds of international struggles blowing across the region must not bring about any change in the ruling structures [of any of the Gulf States]--especially Yemen. Consequently, Aden must not be allowed to exploit the situation in order to impose the principle of unity on the weak northern part. Then this unity would advance the interests of the southern part.

The Saudi displeasure remained hidden, until the news of the probable ministerial and governmental change in Sana'a' appeared. It was accompanied by other news, the source of which was Aden, that the North Yemeni authority would soon reach an agreement with its opponents who were in Aden, and the members of the "National Democratic Front." It has also been said that Mr Sultan Ahmad 'Umar, the head of this Front, will be a member of any new government, bearing in mind that the formula proposed is a government of national confederation. Saudi Arabia did not exercise her authority in face of this news except to protest. Saudi Arabia translated

this protest into a partial stoppage of financial aid, and a threat to halt it completely if Sana'a were to chose unity with the South in the form which the South itself wants, and which does not enjoy Riyadh's blessing. Therefore, North Yemeni Prime Minister 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani hastened to Riyadh seeking clarification from the authorities there. The most that 'Abd al-Ghani achieved was a reduction of Saudi anger--transforming it into a reprimand, and then a dialogue, but this did not solve the real difficult problems.

It can be said that Sana'a' today cannot dispense with Saudi aid, especially in that it is coming within sight of the end of its five-year development plan which commenced in 1976. It has begun preparation for the Second Five-Year Plan, which it wants to carry out under the auspices of political stability and harmony with the southern part. Saudi Arabia has hitherto contributed more than 400 million dollars to the present plan, and Sana'a' is dependent on Riyadh with respect to the next plan.

On the other hand, Sana'a' is striving to conclude a union with Aden. Moreover, it is working to develop democratic life and to prepare the atmosphere for general elections with a view to setting up a Popular Assembly. These are matters which Aden insists on, within the framework of the negotiations on unity. It is natural that the political complications of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan not to speak of the military movements which have accompanied it have engendered feelings of fear in Sana'a' and warine [illegible] of Aden's strength and ability to gain control of Sana'a' by means of the [North Yemeni] opposition and their front.

Therefore, it has intensified the statements which have denied a governmental reshuffle on the basis that 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abdul al-Ghani is remaining as prime minister. This means that Sana'a' has preferred to temporize, and has retained the man whom Saudi Arabia supports. As for "the confederation government," to the premiership of which another person in the government--namely, Nasan Makki--has been nominated, it seems to have been postponed while awaiting clarification of the international atmosphere regarding the Gulf.

However, observers expect that Saudi Arabia will not be satisfied with the reassurances which it has obtained from 'Abd al-Ghani. They consider that the political situation in Sana'a' may--in the short term--have needed a regrouping of forces. But it is still not known whether this step will enjoy success, and determination of this may be left to circumstances.

9579
CSO: 4802

BRIEFS

ARAB FUND LOANS--Dr Muhammad al-'Imadi, director of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, announced that the fund has offered 52 loans to a total value of 310 million Kuwaiti dinars ($US1,116 million) to 14 Arab countries up to the end of last October. He said that the fund engaged in more than 100 joint Arab projects in Egypt, and from among these selected 20 to which it gave priority for the purpose of interconnecting the parts of the Arab nation. In this field, the fund prepared a serious study of radio and telegraphic communication links in the Arab countries of western Asia, and this study gave rise to two projects, one to link the networks of Syria and Iraq and the other to link the networks of Jordan and Saudi Arabia. [Text] [Manama AL-ADWA' in Arabic 29 Mar 80 p 4]

CSO: 4802

BRIEF

POLITICAL PRISONERS PERISH- Two hundred thirty five political prisoners perished from hunger, disease and overcrowding in central jail in Kabul since Babrak Karmal came to power. Because of Karmal government's cruelties, another 1,000 political prisoners suffer from similar conditions in Kandahar, Ghazni, Herat and Jalalabad Prisons. Thirty-five thousand prisoners are herded like animals in Kabul's central jail which has a capacity of only 8,000. This is according to reports reaching Quetta from the other side of the border. According to these reports, there is no record of a tragedy of this magnitude in living memory [in Afghanistan]. [Text] [Quotta JANG in Urdu 24 Feb 80 p 1] 9557

CSO: 4211

NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT ACTIVITIES, MEETINGS REPORTED

Coordination Discussed

Algiers REVOLUTION AFRICAINE in French 14-20 Mar 80 p 6

[Text] On Tuesday, 7 March, the chief of state presided at a meeting attended by the Political Bureau department heads. The meeting, at which Mohamed Salah Yahiaoui, member of the Political Bureau and party coordinator, was present, was devoted to the study of certain problems pertaining to party activities and the functioning of the department.

The following day, Wednesday, 8 March, the Political Bureau met to discuss questions pertaining to party organizational problems on the basis of a report submitted by a juridical and general organization commission, within the framework of preparations for the third session of the Central Committee.

Apart from these party organizational problems, the Political Bureau studied various reports submitted by the different commissions.

The coordination meetings bringing together the party coordinator, the president of the commission and the department heads of the FLN, were designed to ensure the harmonization of structures, to avoid interference and duplication and to introduce the most efficient means of making the activities of all of the party organs complement each other.

It is true that the texts resulting from the Fourth Party Congress defined the authority of each FLN structure, whatever its function, as clearly as possible, both from the juridical and political points of view. But it is obvious that the level of their operation cannot be improved unless a framework for organization and, above all, coordination, is established to ensure maximal success for all party actions. Therefore, apart from the fact that they permit continuous evaluation of the work undertaken, the coordination meetings have an organic nature of great importance which cannot fail to dynamize the actions of the party.

Noticeable Development

The work the party does on the upper level, in particular that of the central commissions, is felt at the base level. In fact, a number of proposals drafted by the commissions (the reorganization of agricultural undertakings and Arabicization) were submitted to the party militants, who studied them in the course of cell meetings. In this connection, work groups were established to formalize all of the suggestions from the base to be passed on to the upper levels. It is on this complex of viewpoints that the party Central Committee will work.

Thus, in accordance with the FLN texts, the democratic nature of militant action is developing perceptibly. This is also demonstrated by the coordination councils which, while working to eliminate wrangling, isolated actions and multiple authority, are strengthening collegiate work and above all introducing the concept of complementary work by the organs of the party and the state, which has the merit of establishing a democratic tradition within the party structures. These coordination councils, which represent a rather efficient formula, have been expanded on the "kasma" level, thus enabling the party and the APC to establish the close collaboration necessary for the proper advance of the communes.

However it should be stressed that the coordination councils in the governorates benefit from the very rich experience of the old commissariat councils of the party. It is a question today of deriving advantage from all of these factors and also completing the FLN structures, in particular by establishing the federations, in order to foresee the normal functioning of the councils. For the time being at least, matters are developing under the best conditions, because the party levels are engaging in broad economic and political activities.

In any case, the reports which will be submitted at the next Central Committee sessions, some of which are already complete, are the results of intensive party work not only on the level of the base units, but also at the top. This suggests, moreover, that on the organic level, the FLN has developed perceptibly.

Reports Studied

Algiers REVOLUTION AFRICAINE in French 21-27 Mar 80 pp 8-9

[Text] Meeting on Wednesday, 12 March, the Political Bureau heard reports of the results of the work of the summit conference of countries adjacent to the Sahara which met recently in Bamako, with Algeria, Mali, Libya, Niger, Mauritania and Chad represented. In this connection, it expressed satisfaction with these results, which come within the framework of the good neighbor and fruitful cooperation policy.

In addition, the Political Bureau pursued the study of the reports of the third session of the Central Committee and in this connection considered organizational problems pertaining to the elections on the federation level, as well as the rules governing the selection of delegates to the extraordinary party conference, in accordance with the decision of the Fourth Congress, the bylaws and the internal regulations of the National Liberation Front Party.

The communique issued revealed a key concern of the Political Bureau, i.e. the completion of the base structures of the party, the establishment of which was undertaken immediately after the congress, and the complete study of all the reports which are to be submitted at the next session of the Central Committee.

The various party commissions have spared no effort to complete the study in depth of all the points included on the agenda of the third session of the Central Committee which will be held soon.

A certain number of proposals were even made to the base level of the militants in order to give all of the actions of the FLN a democratic nature. Also, the Arabicization project and the report on agriculture were discussed on the cell level, which also gave them a rather special interest.

Thus the preparations for the third session of the Central Committee are being made not only on the higher party level, but have also been undertaken by the base structures of the party. The Political Bureau is making every effort to guarantee the necessary success for this session. This is particularly important since the Central Committee will take up complex reports of great interest to the citizens because they pertain to the economic, social, political and cultural life of the country. For how can they fail to be interested when such problems as those of agriculture, Arabicization, education and health, among others, are involved?

Because of this fact it is important to provide the best working conditions for the Central Committee sessions, the work of which will doubtless result in extremely important decisions. Thus it is within this context that the series of Political Bureau meetings devoted to the study of the reports which will be submitted to the Central Committee must be situated.

Currently, the party is pursuing the implementation of the organic program undertaken just following the fourth congress of the FLN. After the cell and "kasma" level elections, it is now time to proceed with renewal on the federation level, in accordance with the provisions of the bylaws and the internal regulations.

Just recently, the general assemblies of "kasma" militants undertook a great discussion about the procedure for electing delegates to the federation. The point of view of the base level on this problem was broadly expressed,

which cannot fail to have an influence on the decisions of the political leadership, which is concerned with respect for the exercise of democratic centralism.

The rules governing the selection of delegates to the extraordinary party congress, which were studied during the Political Bureau meeting, are set forth in the bylaws. Thus Article 93 provides that the delegates to the congress are democratically elected by the militants and according to the methods decreed by the Central Committee. The People's National Army delegates are selected according to special procedures. Article 94 stipulates that "the following will also participate in the congress, their number not to exceed one-sixth of the total number of congress participants: members of the Central Committee, militants carrying out important responsibilities within the party, the mass organizations, and the state institutions, designated according to the methods established by the Central Committee."

Moreover, the election commission met last Monday in order to plan the first mobilization seminar on the level of each governorate, with a view to popularizing the various prerogatives of the communal people's assemblies and in particular to define their field of action, in accordance with the texts and laws in effect on the one hand, and, on the other, in terms of their missions within the framework of national development just prior to the beginning of the next five-year plan. It is not enough to simply hold the elections, for they must also lead to concrete results and produce the expected effects. To that end, an effort is being made to implement the principle of "the man needed in the place needed." This cannot fail to have a particular impact on the functioning of our institutions. The situation of the APC is very important. It is a question today of an effort to provide it with the conditions leading to dynamization. The "kasma" coordination of councils are producing positive results. But the regional seminars are without a doubt designed to provide the APC with the means of functioning within the framework of the texts governing them.

Central Committee Session

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 20 Mar 80 p 1

[Text] Within the framework of completing the study of the reports to be submitted at the third Central Committee session, Mr Chadli Bendjedid, president of the republic and secretary-general of the FLN, presided Wednesday at a meeting of the Political Bureau held at the headquarters of the Presidency of the Republic to study the report pertaining to agriculture.

In the course of the meeting, the Political Bureau heard reports submitted by the minister of agriculture and agrarian reform and the secretary-general of the National Union of Algerian Peasants.

It was also decided that the third session of the Central Committee of the party will begin its work in the course of the first week of this coming month of May.

5157
CSO: 4400

BRIEFS

FLN ADVANCED CADRE SCHOOL--The studies and political training commission met yesterday at the party headquarters on Emir Abdelkader Square, with Ali Ammar Mohamed, the Central Committee member heading that commission, presiding. During the course of the meeting a general discussion was held on the implementation of temporary provisions in connection with political training pending the definitive establishment of the advanced party cadre school. It was also agreed to make use henceforth of the existing infrastructure to begin the immediate training of those who will be responsible for sponsoring the political and organic activity of the party on the base level. The organization of a national seminar on political and ideological training was discussed, as was the organization of militant university sessions this coming summer bringing base-level party cadres together on a regional or national scale. The discussion dealt with the implementation of the decision of the second session of the Central Committee pertaining to the need for political training in the schools and universities. [Text] [Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 6 Mar 80 p 1] 5157

CSO: 4400

ABANDONED PRESSES TO BE HANDED OVER TO GUIDANCE MINISTRY

Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 7 Apr 80 p 2

[Text] Tehran--Presses previously belonging to those connected with the previous regime who have now fled from the country will be handed over to the Ministry of National Guidance, it was announced by Minister of National Guidance Dr. Nassir Minachi.

Minachi said that the Foundation of Mostazafin which is now supervising these presses is not in a position to support them financially.

He said the press affair should be in the hands of the Ministry of National Guidance so it is being now considered that they should be transferred to the miuistry.

Dr. Minachi said that in principle the government does not want to own the newspapers so it was preferred that the printshops should be put under the control of the Ministry of National Guidance.

The minister said that he personally believed that a public company should be formed through selling of shares and the ministry could also buy 40 percent of those shares.

"What I mean," he said, "is that the press should not become governmental."

Dr. Minachi said the plan was designed with the aim that the press should not have financial difficulties and should receive financial aid when necessary.

He said part of the shares could be sold to the employees and workers of these presses which will give them an incentive to work harder.

He said the plan has not yet been finalized and studies are going on which will be submitted to the Revolutionary Council after completion.

CSO: 4920

BRIEFS

AIRLINE COMPANY WITH PAKISTAN--Karachi (AP)--Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and Iran's national flag carrier "Homa" will set up a joint air company to operate on international cargo routes, the local daily "Dawn" of Karachi said yesterday. Preliminary discussions on the proposal have been held in Karachi and Tehran during the last month. The daily reported the new air company will have four to five Boeing 747s to operate the cargo service, PIA has agreed to lend its two jumbo jets for the cargo service, it said. [Text] [Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 6 Apr 80 p 1]

CSO: 4920

CAUSES FOR DECLINE OF SHEEP HERDS EXPLAINED

Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 6 Mar 80 p 7

[Interview with Dr Ahmad al-Faqih of Research Department of the College of Agriculture, University of Jordan, conducted by AL-DUSTUR: "Shortage of Feed and High Cost of Available Supplies Has Led To Slaughter of Lambs. Scientific methods are not applied to animal husbandry."]

[Text] The animal wealth of Jordan is a national resource which will be one of the pillars of the national economy. It comprises nearly one-half of national agricultural income. In view of the importance of animal husbandry to nutrition and to the economy, we wanted to research the means of improving its production, shed some light on the problems which confront it, and propose appropriate solutions for these problems and ways to revitalize this national resource. It is in this context that we met with Dr Ahmad al-Faqih who told us:

"The importance of the animal resource has become obvious to everyone. We become aware of it as we take our daily meals which almost always include an animal by-product.

"It must be pointed out that this kind of food [meat and dairy products] is highly nutritious. It includes an important share of the protein we consume in our food, as well as vitamins B2, riboflavin (found in milk), B12 which is only found in animal products, and some minerals, such as calcium, which is plentiful in milk and milk by-products.

"From the standpoint of economic value, animal products contribute effectively to national income. More than one-third of agricultural income is derived from animal resources. In addition, this sector plays a role in providing employment, be it on farms or in related industries, such as slaughterhouses, dairies and textile mills."

Dr al-Faqih turns his comments to the problems of Jordan's animal resources: "There are a number of problems which hamper this resource here. It has been noticed that animal populations have declined due to 1) a shortage

of feed and the high cost of available supplies, and 2) the fact that scientific methods and techniques for animal husbandry are not being applied.

"The first problem can be treated by means of improving grazing lands and pasturage. Unfortunately, our country has for a long time let grazing lands deteriorate for many reasons. Most important of these is haphazard grazing management and overgrazing. Since there can only be a specific ratio of animals supported by an area of pasturage, when that ratio is surpassed it causes an impoverishment of the pasturage.

"In addition, there has been insufficient rainfall, use of trees for fuel--which is very bad, and the plowing of grazing land to plant wheat and barley crops--which destroys the layer of grass covering the land. All of these things tend to destroy pasture lands.

"However, awareness of all these factors has become widespread. There has been planting of trees by citizens from time to time with the aim of restoring greenery and conserving some regions. All of this will aid to augment and preserve pasture lands."

Dr al-Faqih says that his excellency Crown Prince Hasan invited an Australian team to bring to Jordan methods followed in arid lands in Australia so that corresponding Jordanian lands may be planted with special grasses, such as Hijazi clover and other grasses resistant to hot weather.

Dr al-Faqih adds: "Should we succeed in implementing these notions, that is restoring cultivation of some of the plants which were once indigenous to our land, and should the Ministry of Agriculture implement its project to develop grasslands in cooperation with cooperative societies, we will have rendered a great service to Jordan's animal wealth as well as to its economy."

By the project to develop grasslands, Dr al-Faqih means creating grasslands in state-owned lands which exist in presently marginal areas with regard to the support of animal resources.

He divides this project into the following stages:

1. Fruit tree cultivation in the areas chosen by the Ministry of Agriculture based on practical consideration for the planting season--from September to December. The cooperative societies will provide the required labor by involving their own members in the operation. On the other hand, the Ministry of Agriculture will undertake technical supervision of the planting campaign and will provide the cooperatives with the necessary seedlings from government nurseries.

2. A program to fatten livestock and sheep by providing members of cooperative societies which help the tree cultivation program with facilitated means of obtaining adequate amounts of animal feed. This will be

done by procuring and selling barley at lowered prices to the collectives' members during periods of drought and natural depletion of the fields and during periods when there is an interruption in grazing in lands being planted with fruit trees.

Other details of this project relate to the distribution of roles in the work plan, and the distribution of the local costs of the project, including the cost of the feed. Its transport by sea to Jordan will be borne by the World Food Program. The Ministry of Agriculture assumes the costs of land transport of the feed from Aqaba to the warehouses of the cooperatives. The cooperative societies will assume responsibility for storage and distribution costs. They will also assume the cost of project management and other matters.

9587
CSO: 4802

ARAB REGIMES SEEN AS DISUNITED AND WEAK IN THE FACE OF AMERICAN THREATS

Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 16 Feb 80 pp 1, 10

[Article by Balal Al-Hasan: "American Encroachment and the Absence of Arab Political Action"]

[Text] The news reaching the average Arab citizen carries a political, difficult, and serious picture. On the other hand, the policies of the Arab regimes and their relationships with one another present a disunified and fragile picture which does not conform with the dangers surrounding him.

The average Arab citizen hears and sees that the American military forces are heading toward the Gulf area and obtaining bases in one Arab country or another. This is done without any Arab reaction demanding the expulsion of these forces, or exercising pressure to prevent any Arab government from accepting the existence of foreign bases on its soil.

The average Arab citizen hears and sees that the possibility of renewed fighting between Syria and Israel has become the subject of constant discussion between American and Israeli officials in the papers, while there appears to be no existence of any Arab alliance with Syria, which may constitute support to Syria if the fighting breaks out.

The average Arab citizen hears and sees that American, British, and French envoys are travelling freely in the Arab world, obtaining military and political facilities, and concluding large economic deals. All of this does not affect the stands of these countries toward the Israeli policy which insists on continuing the settlement policy and interfering in the Lebanese internal affairs.

The average Arab citizen hears and sees that the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front has been established in order to face Sadat's policy. But in practice the citizen does not see any practical achievement with the exception of some popular conferences, or defining some political stands. At the same time the average Arab citizen hears and sees that the Baghdad summit was established to provide a total rejection of Sadat's

policy. Then he discovers that the summit was restricted only to the implementation of some sanctions without the adoption of an alternate political line to organize a common Arab diplomacy.

The ordinary Arab citizen hears and sees all this around him, and reaches one conclusion. threat and danger surround him, the Arab strategy to face this danger is non-existent, and the Arab leadership assigned to take the responsibility of this strategy is absent.

In light of the absence of the Arab strategy and leadership, a series of conflicting political stands are growing. These stands weaken the Arab position and increase the desire of those who want to exploit it.

With regard to the Lebanese crisis, we have seen some Arabs who seek a solution at Syria's expense, while others want a solution which takes into consideration Syria's special position in Lebanon. It is all right, if the Lebanese citizen pays a high price out of his life and bread earnings as a result of trying out one solution or another.

Regarding the [Palestinian] self-rule which is being negotiated between Egypt and Israel, we see those Arabs who are called moderates encourage the acceptance of a self-rule leading to a Palestinian state, while others insist on rejecting all of these designs as part of the Camp David schemes.

On the level of the general Palestinian situation, we see those Arabs who continue supporting the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) and seek more world recognition of the PLO, while others are openly or covertly encouraging the Jordanian regime to come forward again as a substitute to the PLO in order to form a united kingdom as an alternative to the PLO's plan to establish a Palestinian state.

Outside the framework of these general issues which constitute a political bond between the Arab governments, there is a series of regional conflicts which highlight a state of disunity, no less dangerous than the examples previously mentioned. These regional conflicts include the constant Egyptian threat to Libya, the current crisis between Libya and Tunisia, the war between Morrocco and Algeria, the tensions between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, Syria and Iraq. These regional conflicts create internal problems which keep those countries busy with their internal affairs, while the great schemes continue with the confidence that the Arab situation will not present any obstacles in its way. In some cases these internal problems are utilized as threats or as an excuse to offer foreign intervention as means of protection.

The natural result of this continued situation is that each regime will be more and more isolated. This in turn will give the imperialist countries an opportunity to pressure and exhaust the Arab world to the fullest extent, thereby creating a series of Arab axes which would find themselves in constant and unending conflict.

There is no way out of all this except through an Arab meeting, well prepared in advance, to set up a unified Arab strategy. This strategy should agree on two issues: Facing the Israeli threat and facing the American threat that is advancing into the area and toward the oil sources. When it becomes impossible to plan a unified Arab policy of this kind, then let us make a clear and decisive separation between the two Arab camps which are fighting over either the independence or the dependence of the area.

The present disunity is almost a catastrophic situation. And those who think that the storm outside the borders cannot cross any borders at the wink of an eye are wrong.

9607
CSO: 4802

LEBANESE REPRESENTATIVE WARNS AGAINST CIVIL WAR

Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 19 Feb 80 p 4

[AL-SAFIR interview with representative Fu'ad Lahud: "New Signs of Civil War and Grouping of the Syrian Army"]

[Text] Representative Fu'ad Lahud warned against new signs of civil war in Lebanon, and declared that the government does not want to apply the defense law. He said "the government's behavior has opened the door to the rejection of the use of the army."

The Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for Defense and Security criticized the deployment of the army to replace the deterrent forces saying, "If military necessity has dictated the regrouping of the deterrent forces, how can we fragment our army which is still young and not strong enough?" This has been stated in an interview with representative Lahud with regard to moving the army to replace the Arab deterrent forces. Lahud said, "The Syrian army will not pull out of Lebanon. It will regroup in certain centers so that it does not remain a traffic policeman. This is what I proposed 2 years ago. I have said in the past and continue to say that keeping any army on the borders of the buffer zone for too long is a matter which contradicts with military tradition, and I keep repeating this because such a situation will finally lead to the weakening of the army's capabilities, and creating friction between the army and the people. As a matter of fact, I alerted the Syrian leadership to this fact. The Syrian leadership decided to regroup its forces in Lebanon."

Mr Lahud added, "At this point, we must raise two questions: First, why did this measure take place without the knowledge of the president who is the Chief Commander of these forces? The matter should have been discussed with him in order to avoid the dramatic nature it eventually took. Second, if it has become necessary to regroup the Syrian army units lest it should loose its effectiveness, then how can we fragment the young Lebanese army which might suffer a fatal setback? Knowing that there are Lebanese groups who do not approve of using the army for security matters before reorganizing it, and applying the new defense law."

Lahud said, "At this point, we also raise the question: If the army is to be forced to move into the streets, what will be the result? And if the army does not get to the street before the approval of all parties, then, there is no need for moving the army to the street. And in this case, the internal security forces should be sufficient. Out of all this, we can see the confusion, ambiguity, capriciousness, outbiddings and lack of seriousness in governing the state."

With regard to the defense law, which is a prerequisite for Lebanese accord, the representative asked, "Why has the law not been implemented till now? The government does not want to apply the defense law. The proof of this lies in the law's second article which notes that the Supreme Defense Council is responsible for executing the defense and security policy, for dividing the responsibilities among various departments, for giving instructions and directions, and then following up on its execution."

Lahud continued, "Two and a half years ago, I respectfully drew the attention of the president to what should be done in the field of defense and security, but regretfully I was met with deaf ears. I also submitted several written memoranda to the president which I feel, publishing them now, is inappropriate because they became his own property." Lahud asked, "If the president considers the defense law unfit, then why was it published? If we suppose that the president has noticed gaps in the law after it was published, then why did he not request an amendment in the law?" After discussing the application of the law, Lahud moved on to the political settlement. He said, "The state is supposed to be strong in order to impose reconciliation, but where is that strong state? Up until now, it does not exist."

Lahud added that he has drawn the attention of the president to the need for issuing two laws: first, a new defense law. Second, a new election law which make a deputy responsible for representing all of Lebanon and all factions.

The reconciliation would be realized through the Chamber of Deputies because it cannot be achieved through round tables. This is because members to the round tables act from factional or regional principles, and they cannot reach an understanding among themselves simply because they speak different languages and become like the Babylonians in Tower of Babel.

Lahud called for coordination of the efforts between Syrian and Lebanese authorities to avoid reaching a deadlock. He said, "The decision of regrouping the Syrian forces was not the result of lack of coordination, but it was imposed by military necessity." And this is what the Foreign Minister Khaddam disclosed in his interview with AL-SAFIR.

9607
CSO: 4802

LABOR ACCEPTS GOVERNMENT'S WAGE INCREASES

Beirut THE ARAB WORLD WEEKLY in English 12 Apr 80 pp 12-13

[Text] Lebanese labour leaders have accepted the 29 percent wage hike approved by the Cabinet Wednesday and canceled the general strike they were threatening to stage. The Confederation of Labour Unions announced the decision on Thursday.

The Lebanese Cabinet had on Wednesday approved the increase for all workers and employees in the private sector, retroactive to January 1, 1980. The Cabinet also raised the legal minimum wages from LL.525 to LL.675 (for workers hired after January 1, 1979) and to LL.710 (for workers hired before that date). Explaining the decision, Labour Minister Nazem Kadri said the 29 percent salary increase would be given on condition that it not exceed LL.625 per month and not be less than LL.150 per month. He also said that in addition to the pay hike, a number of measures would be taken to make life easier for the wage earners.

--Certain income tax exemptions, to be specified at a later date;
--An increase in the monthly family allowances paid to workers and employees by the Social Security authority;
--Speeding up housing, cooperative and "popular market" projects which are now before Parliament and which, once set in motion, can relieve workers of part of their housing and consumer expenses;
--Reviving the "National Labour Council," which is made up of representatives of the state, the employees and the employers, to decide on ways of offering more social services;
--"Seriously thinking" of major public transport projects which would reduce transportation expenses;
--Instructing the Statistical Department to resume work on the Lebanese cost-of-living index--interrupted by the war--"to allow the State to keep an eye on the cost of living and take the appropriate measures."

The Confederation of Labour, in its acceptance of the increase, demanded that the same increase be granted to government employees. Officials say that public sector employees would get a comparable raise, but a final decision on this matter is not expected before July.

Labour Demands. The Confederation of Labour also coupled its acceptance of the Cabinet decision with a series of other demands, including:

--Formation of a tripartite committee, made up of government, workers and employers' representatives, to set up a cost-of-living index.

--Extension of the three-month freeze on food prices ordered by the government last month, and its strict application.

--Freezing the controversial residential rent bill recently approved by parliamentary committees pending the execution of a comprehensive housing policy, and introducing a 25 percent rent reduction for rent contracts signed between 1970 and 1971, and a 50 percent reduction on 1974-1980 contracts.

--Creation of "popular markets" and cooperative centers in all parts of the country.

--Canceling customs and municipal duties on food products, banning export of animal and agricultural products and permitting the import of such products to cover local consumption needs.

--Fighting smuggling.

--Ensuring free hospitalization for all Lebanese and introducing free higher education.

--Implementing the rules relating to a national medicine office and setting medicine prices.

Employers' Reaction. While labour applauded, employers' representatives reiterated that they would refuse to abide by the Cabinet's pay-hike decision unless their own demands were met. Those included more credit to increase investment and production, and the rescheduling of prewar loans obtained from local banks by businessmen who have been adversely affected by the war.

Industrialists' Association President Fouad Abi Saleh said that employers cannot afford to pay the workers any wage hikes because the banks "will not give us the loans we need." He added that a law providing for the rescheduling of prewar loans was also needed, and that the employers would not resort to "negative action"--presumably a strike--unless negotiations with the government on these demands produced unsatisfactory results.

Labour Minister Kadri had said that the Cabinet did not neglect the demands of the employers. He said that the sum of LL.400 million had earlier been earmarked for loans to the industrial sector but had not been distributed

because of disagreement on credit terms. He said that obstacle had been eliminated. He also said that a bill for the rescheduling of loans had been referred to Parliament but had been shelved because of differences on the definition of "adversely affected" businessmen. He stressed that the bill dealt only with loans secured from banks in Lebanon.

CSO: 4820

BANKS MOVE FORWARD DESPITE DIFFICULTIES

Paris AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 7 Apr 80 pp 14-15

[Text]

Lebanese bankers have managed to expand their activities despite war, recession, a credit squeeze and, more recently, serious inflation. That in broad lines was the report delivered to the annual general meeting of the Lebanese Bankers' Association on March 29 by its Chairman, Dr Assaad Sawaya of the Banque de l'Industrie et du Travail. Dr Sawaya was able to present a remarkably optimistic picture of Lebanese banking, given the difficulties which bankers, along with the rest of the Lebanese, continue to face.

According to Dr Sawaya's report, deposits in Lebanon's 76 banks rose from about LL 14 billion (LL 1 = $0.293) at the end of 1978 to roughly LL 18 billion at the end of last year, an increase of 28 per cent. Local loans in Lebanese pounds likewise increased from LL 10 billion to LL 12 billion in round figures, a rise of 20 per cent, even though the Bank of Lebanon imposed a severe squeeze on credit in mid-1979.

Foreign investments by Lebanese commercial banks amounted to about LL 5 billion at the end of 1979; in accordance with the credit regulations imposed by the Bank of Lebanon, 15 per cent of all deposits must be placed in obligatory reserve accounts with the central bank.

The figures, according to Dr Sawaya, were indicative of expansion in Lebanon's banking sector even if one took into account the effects of inflation (a wage claim by Lebanon's General Confederation of Labour cites an annual inflation rate of 29 per cent). The figures also demonstrated the faith which Lebanese and non-Lebanese clients of the banks had maintained in Lebanon's financial institutions, Dr Sawaya declared.

Dr Sawaya's report indicated improvements in the Lebanese economy last year as compared with 1978, when renewed bouts of fighting halted the recovery which had begun in 1977. He admitted, however, that important statistics on Lebanon's exports and imports were not available – and probably never would be. The reason, he said, was the large volume of trade now being conducted through illegal ports outside the government's control.

Even so, Dr Sawaya said, imports registered by government agencies probably amounted to about LL 6 billion in 1979 compared with LL 5.1 billion the previous year; exports cleared through official channels were worth about LL 2.6 billion last year against some LL 2 billion in 1978; customs receipts were up from LL 509 million in 1978 to LL 682 million last year and would have been considerably higher were it not for the large quantities of goods being smuggled into the country through the illegal ports.

Lebanon's trading deficit, Dr Sawaya noted, had been covered by capital inflows, especially remittances from Lebanese working in the Arab oil producing countries. If due account is taken of the distortions due to smuggling cited by Dr Sawaya, this would indicate that these remittances are running at least at a level of $100 million a month and are probably somewhat higher.

Trade gap cited as a cause of inflation

According to Dr Sawaya, the fact that Lebanon imported roughly three times as much as it exported is a major cause for inflation because the country has had to bear the full brunt of higher prices for oil and imported manufactures. A second factor, he said, was the absence

of any control on prices and no apparent limit on profit margins. It was as if sellers had reached some sort of tacit agreement on prices, Dr Sawaya's report stated.

Lebanon's state budget (*An-Nahar Arab Report & MEMO*, March 31) had also contributed to inflation because the government had been obliged to borrow, either through the sale of Treasury bonds or through loans, in order to meet its expenses – and a large number of its expenses were unproductive. Dr Sawaya called on the government to adopt a three-pronged programme of increasing its revenues, initiating constructive projects and stepping up its fight against illicit trading. He admitted, however, that this programme required a climate of security which was not currently present in Lebanon.

Referring to the special problems which confronted Lebanese bankers in 1979, Dr Sawaya singled out the credit squeeze. He explained that this was due to the fact that the banks were over-liquid at the beginning of 1979 even though the volume of loans had more than doubled from 1977 to 1978. Businesses were being encouraged to borrow and the cost of money was relatively low at that time, Dr Sawaya recalled.

Many of the loans, however, were used for speculative purposes rather than for productive projects and borrowers were taking advantage of the low interest rates in Lebanon to convert Lebanese pounds into foreign currencies. This movement drove down the value of the Lebanese pound *vis-à-vis* the dollar, which went from $1 = LL 0.300 at the beginning of 1979 to LL 0.335 in May and to about LL 0.350 on December 12 last year. The fall in the value of the pound was even more marked, Dr Sawaya noted, because the dollar itself had been falling in value against other currencies.

The Bank of Lebanon's normal method of defending the pound by buying or selling in the foreign exchange market had proved inadequate in 1979, prompting the credit squeeze. Some bankers, he noted, had protested that the Bank of Lebanon's regulations were a severe blow to the only sector of the economy which was showing signs of vigour. Others, he said, recognised that the measures were necessary to curb speculation, notably in real estate, which was undermining the economy. The result of the squeeze, Dr Sawaya said, was to restore a measure of stability to the pound. In July, the dollar stood at LL 0.325 and had maintained the same exchange rate in December.

Dr Sawaya noted that five new banks had been permitted to open in Lebanon in the past two years in accordance with a law passed in 1977. Each of these banks had an authorised capital of a least LL 15 million and there were reports that six other banks, each with a capital of not less than LL 15 million, would be granted licences shortly, he added.

The annual meeting of the association, which was attended by representatives of 54 of Lebanon's 76 banks, re-elected unanimously the outgoing board. Dr Sawaya was later re-elected Chairman by the board, as were the association's Vice President Naaman Azhari of the Banque du Liban et d'Outre-Mer, and Treasurer Felix Abou-Jaoudé of the Banque Libanaise pour le Commerce. Other board members are Georges Achi of the Crédit Commercial de France, François Bassile of the Banque Byblos, Souheil Béchara of the Arab Bank, Fouad Gemayel of the Litex Bank, Rizkallah Génadry of the British Bank of the Middle East, Joseph Gholam of the Crédit Populaire, J-L Lagentz of the Crédit Lyonnais, Béchara Obéji of the Crédit Libanais and HJ Felder of the Chase Manhattan Bank.

CSO: 4820

RULING OUT 'INTERIM' PROJECTS URGED

Riyadh AL-YAMAMAH in Arabic 21 Mar 80 p 9

[Editorial by Dr. Abd al-Rahman al-Shubayli: "Interim Projects and the Coming Plan"]

[Text] I wish that the ministries of finance and planning would publish a declaration prohibiting use of the term "interim" in the conventional terms or projects of the coming Third Development Plan.

In past years, certain state agencies have been forced to take over and execute interim projects due to circumstances imposed by the ambitions of the previous plan. We have come to have interim schools, interim bridges, interim hospitals, interim television stations, interim artificial satellites, etc. Nobody argues the fact that most of these projects have actually served in record time the urgent objectives for which they were carried out. Interim measures are normally intended to serve immediate temporary objectives governed by time or location, such as the Pilgrimage situation, [oil] exploration camps, remote projects and similar operations for short durations or for a seasonal locale not prepared for permanent facilities. However, our problem is that most of the interim projects which have been carried out have helped delay execution of the permanent alternatives. They have also given the country an interim character, as though our commitment to this land were set for a short period of time.

For instance, in 1384 A.H. [1964 A.D.], the first two television stations were built, in Jidda and Riyadh. The desire to complete them required that they be of prefabricated materials, and they were called "Interim TV Stations" by both the advisory and construction companies which built them. As God would have it, they have remained in use until this year. Their existence and our reliance upon them have been a factor in that the appropriate projects implementation agency has felt no urgency to implement the corresponding permanent stations.

Temporary measures do not shorten [execution] time in the long run. They also do not help reduce costs, and require increasing amounts of extra maintenance.

Responsibility for sound planning, development of the country on strong foundations, and anticipation of the growing needs of future generations, are matters no less important than the need to find solutions for sudden bottlenecks created by implementation of hurried ambitious growth programs.

If we consider our situation now, we find that the projects which are the best and the most worthy of appreciation are those which are carried out on sound, studied principles in which factors of durability and permanence are taken into consideration. They deserve appreciation and admiration for the officials who were behind their execution. They evoke feelings of trust and responsibility to the nation and future generations, and they are a source of religious, social and patriotic pride.

The "technology" of development and construction has provided us with progressive and rapid methods, but they are not temporary and do not rate lower in quality, flexibility and durability than the traditional methods which were used in the past and took time to carry out. We have witnessed these methods applied successfullly in well-known projects. Both the "national trust" and the sense of "professionalism" were served in record time as projects achieved the growth objectives for which they were designed.

While unexpected circumstances, which we could not anticipate and had not previously experienced, compelled us in past years to forgo certain fundamentals, let us fervently hope, in the interest of this country's future, that we will now be able to completely eliminate the word "interim" from our next plan with regard to all projects in all sectors of the economy.

9605
CSO: 4802

PLANS FOR WEAPONS INDUSTRY DISCUSSED

Riyadh AL-YAMAMAH in Arabic 14 Mar 80 p 8

[Article: "Future Plans to Create Heavy Military Industries"]

[Text] His Royal Highness Sultan ben Abd al-Aziz, Minister of Defense and Aviation and Inspector General, announced that the third five year plan includes projects to develop the military factories in Al-Kharj to manufacture certain ammunition and weapons which the armed forces need.

His Highness added: "There is a plan to create heavy military industries, which we hope to set up ourselves in the Arabian Peninsula and the [Persian] Gulf."

His Highness mentioned that investigation into establishing an organization for military manufacturing in place of the Arab Manufacturing Organization is expected to begin "when our relationship with the companies which were associated with the four member nations in the Organization is settled, so that the new Organization will be established on a better level and with better organization."

His Highness charged these companies with responsibility for failure to be responsive to the three nations [the four members of the Arab Organization minus Egypt]. He said that Egypt is responsible for its relationship with the companies which believe that they have claims against the three nations which dissolved the Organization in view of Egypt's non-Arab stance.

In response to a question as to whether new weapons transactions were effected between the Kingdom and France during the visit of President D'Estaing, His Highness confirmed that relations between the two countries are excellent, be it in the area of military or economic cooperation, but discussions did not touch upon military areas during the visit.

In the course of his answer to a question concerning frequent reports that Afghanistan events are regarded as an initial step for Soviet intervention in the oil fields, His Highness asserted that these oil fields will not be easy prey to anyone, be it the Soviets or the West, because their men protect them. Whoever wants to benefit from the oilfields, he said, has to do it through earning the friendship of the nations which own the oilfields.

9605
CSO: 4802

JOINT INDUSTRIAL VENTURES GROW IN POPULARITY

Jiddah ARAB NEWS in English 8 Mar 80 p 2

[Article by Alan Kennedy]

[Text]

JEDDAH, March 7 — Joint ventures in business and industrial projects are increasing in Saudi Arabia, one government spokesman said.

Minister of Industry and Electricity, Dr. Ghazi Algosaibi, told *Arab News*, "We (the ministry) have licensed more joint ventures in the last three years than in the last 15 years before that." However, Algosaibi on Wednesday said joint ventures serve the mutual needs of both the Saudi investor with his capital and the foreign partner with his technology and skills.

"This marriage proves very successful," he added. Algosaibi was in Jeddah to review local businesses and to deliver a speech at the King Abdul Aziz University. Two of the businesses he visited are a good example of joint ventures within Saudi Arabia, he said.

The Saudi Cable Company and the Arabian Dry Cells Company are young companies that are "good examples of businesses that can survive and flourish."

The Arabian Dry Cells Company is worth SR37 million and will produce 60 million batteries a year. In addition plans are being made to export the product. Already the company has a market in Medina and Mecca. The company's controlling board consists of Saudi stockholders, with Prince Nawaf ibn Abdul Aziz as its chairman. The company produces ordinary dry cells for transistorized equipment, and heavy-duty batteries with medium and high voltage.

The technology for Arabian Dry Cells Company is provided by Finland. Under its 15-year contract, Airam Oy guaranteed to supply technical expertise. In addition the Finnish company will design a specific program to train Saudi men in the trade. Muhammad Awad, the company's general manager, said the firm plans to get indigents from vocational training centers, and with the cooperation of the Ministry of Labor and Social Programs to have On-the-Job-Training programs for Saudis by granting Saudi manpower local scholarships.

Prince Nawaf, chairman of the board, has emphasized that the company has a strong "national obligation." "Our country has given us many things. It is herefor our duty to contribute to the creation of a strong economic base." In addition, he said this is in tune with the state's plan to develop a high industrial base that should provide an alternative to the depletion of oil and should, at the same time, offer an open opportunity for citizens to prove their capability.

The factor of capability is regarded as an important exponent by the Saudi Cable Company, the Kingdom's sole producer of electri cable. "To us a contract is business. More importantly it is trust in a government body, who trusts the local business," one official said. And if trust is measured in business contracts, then Saudi Cable has gained immense proportions of it. By the end of

1979 Saudi Cable had already received more than SR 150 million worth of business. It's latest contract is an award for a SR 58 million contract for supply of materials to be used in the electrification of Qasim.

Saudi Cable began production in July 1978 as a joint venture between the Wire and Cable Division of Anaconda (20 per cent), SoCal (20 per cent) Prince Badr ibn Abdul Mohsin ibn Abdul Aziz (25 per cent). The remainder is owned by Sheikh Abdul Karim Bakr Ahmed and Sheikh Mansoor bin Rahd Al-Ghishayyan.

Saudi Cable sees its advantages as a local company able to supply a product that meets Saudi problems. "When we first came into the market, we saw cables all over the world. Different people do different things as a result of the unique problems of their country. So we saw what we must do for the long term benefit of Saudi Arabia," said Khalid Alireza, chairman of Saudi Cable.

One thing the company has done is to make heat resistant coating for their wires. This means that there can be more current put through the cable without burning--making it more cost effective, according to Alireza. "Then we saw in Saudi Arabia that there was plenty of sun--ordinary cables wouldn't last more than three to four years." The company then found a way to increase the carbon black in their plastic coating to absorb the sun's ultra-violet rays.

In addition, sheeting materials are geared to the Saudi Arabian environment. As a result cable manufacturers around the world don't have to gear specifications to this country. The local purchaser would have it ready for him, the chairman said. However, the biggest battle, according to Alireza, is not producing a quality product suited for geographical needs, but in persuading the buyer that the product will be more cost effective than a product not suited for the country's extremes.

"There are so many products, that marketing is the problem. However, the market position has to be earned. This is a situation where, as you grow you gain a technical respectability in the market place."

Already, Saudi Cable is contemplating expansion. For the business, the major costs are in raw materials, but with the advent of mineral exploration and tentative plans for raw material production within the Kingdom, the company is positive about its growth, Alireza said.

CSO: 4820

PIRACY, SMUGGLING, INSURANCE HURT SHIPPING GROWTH

Jiddah ARAB NEWS in English 17 Mar 80 p 3

[Text] Piracy, smuggling and unethically high rates charged by the insurance cartel are threatening shipping to Saudi Arabia, right in the midst of an expansion program that is allowing the Kingdom's ports to handle the increased traffic.

Saudi ports handled a projected 43.7 million tons of freight in 1979, an increase of 155 percent over the 16.5 million tons handled in 1976. While no one is saying that this volume stands to be reduced by unethical or illegal acts, they are serious enough that Dr. Fayez Badr, President of the Saudi Ports Authority, remarked at the recent sea symposium in France: "Unless we act together--and act decisively--piracy will spread like cancer."

On smuggling, Badr added that, "the act of smuggling is heinous enough in any circumstances but even more so when it threatens a whole way of life."

The fact that Lloyd's of London, the international insurance cartel, was able to charge war zone rates for Arabian Gulf vessels when the area was as peaceful as any other, Badr said, "has only been possible because of the fact that Lloyd's exerts virtual worldwide control over war risk insurance and thus are able to vary premiums as they please."

"I therefore appeal to all shipping nations in the world to use all their influence to prevent such opportunistic behavior in the future."

Notwithstanding such detriments to its waterborne trade, the Kingdom has achieved a miracle of expansion and modernization of its ports facilities, with more on the way; the widely acclaimed decongesting of Saudi Arabia's ports by the Badr-led Saudi Ports Authority was just a first step.

For instance, the 100 berths available at the ports of Jeddah, Dammam, Yangu, Gizan and Jubail in 1979 will soon be augmented to 136. Even more important than berths, however, is the cargo discharge rate. The Port Authority's target of 1,000 tons a day has been reached, and frequently exceeded.

To facilitate productivity, the Ports Authority has invested heavily in mechanization and standardization.

Mechanization, which implies capital intensive rather than labor intensive handling arrangements, has kept the cost of discharging cargo low. And standardization of machines has reduced the stocks of spare parts that had to be maintained as well as simplified administrative and training procedures.

Direct delivery of cargo to the consignee at the dock has helped to speed unloading, as has integrated stevedoring. Containerized cargo is playing an increasing role; estimates are that 80 percent of all cargo could be containerized by 1982, compared to 20 percent in 1978. Thus, Jeddah's container handling capacity is being increased to 560,000 for 1980, compared to 300,000 in 1978. Dammam will handle 520,000 compared to 200,000. The Kingdom's total capacity will be 1,293,000.

Meanwhile, administrative problems have been simplified through the issuance of a unified set of rules and regulations to apply to the whole Kingdom, governing vessels, port operation, safety and navigation. A unified tariff system is being drafted as well.

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BRANCH OF WOMEN'S BANK OPENS

New Concept for Nation

Jiddah ARAB NEWS in English 22 Mar 80 p 2

[Text] Jeddah, March 21--The Saudi-Cairo Bank is to open a women's branch in Riyadh on Wednesday, March 26, becoming the fourth "women only" branch bank in Saudi Arabia.

The Saudi-Cairo women's branch follows the opening of the National Commercial Banks full service ladies branch in Jeddah, and the Al Rajhi Company for money Changing and Commerce in Riyadh and Jeddah.

Other banks expected to follow suit include the Riyadh Bank, Citibank and the Saudi-British Bank. The banks have begun opening branches for women as a result of a ruling by the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency. The banks permit segregation of the sexes and adhere to Islamic teachings giving women the right to manage their business affairs.

Although new to Saudi Arabia, women only branches are fairly common in Kuwait and other Gulf states.

One woman banker from the NCB branch in Jeddah told Arab News that now women could stop storing valuables and money in their homes and deposit it in the bank. The result would be an additional source of funds for investment into the economy, she added.

Support Urged

Jiddah ARAB NEWS in English 22 Mar 80 p 2

[Article by Ali Hussein and Al Medina]

[Text] We are making a clamor and cry over the opening of a women's bank, as if it will bring in its trail some problems for the ladies of our country. Why is it that we are so reluctant to see a woman deposit her funds in a bank whose entire staff is made up of her own species?

There are, after all, many women in commercial business. Some of them, including widows and the divorced, are engaged in sale and purchase transactions, while others' wealth becomes a focal point for the weak-spirited people of their own families. Why can't she have the right to manage her funds and put them herself into a bank that has been opened especially for her?

It seems to be a necessity because other banks do not accept deposits by women and, if they do, it has to be done through a male representative. It is a practice which often puts women depositors to unnecessary difficulties and problems.

Some people have made a big fuss about women's banking, although it is very natural for an affluent country to have such a facility for its citizens.

Our women do not normally go out. But if they do, they are accompanied by someone until they come back home. Our protest of her going out to the bank may create a problem for ourselves. It might necessitate that we close down our hospitals, schools and women's colleges, since the vagabonds will harass them as they will inside a women's bank. It is an opinion calling for a guardian that a woman does not really feel much in need of.

The advocate of the women's bank is, no doubt, a person of refined thinking whose intentions no one can afford to suspect. We will only be unjust to women and to the originator of this idea if we tried to interpret it otherwise. It is definitely a service to women to find an institution to serve her by protecting her resources without any selfish motives.

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BRIEFS

WATER PROJECT--The Environmental Health Committee in the Eastern Province decided to award a contract to a national firm for water sewage systems for the villages of Ank, Al-Jash and Al-Malaha. It will cost 8,175,000 Riyals. The Committee also decided to award a contract for a sewer system for the city of Azqijan and a new slaughterhouse in Al-Ahisa'. It will cost 6,650,400 Riyals. [Text] [Riyadh AL-YAMAMAH in Arabic 14 Mar 80 p 8]

INDUSTRIAL GAS PLANT OPENED--The new industrial gases plant in Al-Dammam was opened last Sunday under the auspices of Prince Muhammad ben Fahd ben Jalwa, acting governor of the Eastern Province. It is regarded as the largest gas factor in the Saudi Arabia. Attending the opening were Dr Ghazi al-Gosaibi, Minister of Industry, a number of high officials and a representative of the company which built it. [Text] [Riyadh AL-YAMAMAH in Arabic 21 Mar 80 p 8]

NEW FACTORY STATISTICS--Dr Ghazi Al-Gosaibi, minister of industry and electricity, announced that the number of factories in Saudi Arabia at the end of the second five-year plan had reached over 900. At the beginning of this period, it was less than 300. In a statement on the occasion of opening the industrial gas plant in Al-Dammam, Dr Ghazi said that this means that the number of factories had tripled in five years. He added that the true measure of success is quality, and that national industry had realized every expectation, both at home and abroad, with regard to both quantity and quality. Dr Ghazi indicated that the basic industries in Al-Jubayl and Yanba', which will [go into operation] this year, are all based on the project for tapping gas flowing from oil wells. [Text] [Riyadh AL-YAMAMAH in Arabic 21 Mar 80 p 7]

SAUDI-NEW ZEALAND INVESTMENT COMPANY--The government-backed Development Finance Corporation of Saudi Arabia announced the formation of a joint New Zealand-Saudi investment company, last week. The new company, the Saudi-New Zealand Capital Corporation, is jointly owned by a group of New Zealand interests and an investment company headed by Prince Nawaf Bin Abdel-Aziz al-Saud, a member of Saudi Arabia's royal family. Incorporated in New Zealand, the joint venture has a capital of $20.78 million. [Text] [Paris AL-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 14 Apr 80 p 12]

BUTANE PRICE LOWERED--Saudi Arabia has for the first time since 1973 lowered the export price of its butane gas; the Associated Press quoted officials in Tokyo as saying the price of butane sold under long-term contract to Japanese customers had been reduced by $5 to $325 a tonne, effective from April 1. At the same time, the Saudis increased the export price of propane by $25 to $300 per tonne, in line with the latest Kuwaiti price rise (AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO, March 24). Kuwait's butane costs $322 per tonne. [Text] [Paris AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 7 Apr 80 p 11]

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NEAR EAST AND AFRICA SERIAL REPORTS

NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA REPORT

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WORLDWIDE REPORT: Environmental Quality
WORLDWIDE REPORT: Epidemiology
WORLDWIDE REPORT: Law of the Sea
WORLDWIDE REPORT: Nuclear Development and Proliferation
WORLDWIDE REPORT: Telecommunications Policy, Research and Development

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6 May 1980

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